

Appendix B

Natural Heritage Ranking System

Listed below are definitions for interpreting the global (range-wide) and subnational (state) status ranks. Global ranks are assigned by NatureServe scientists or by a designated lead office in the Natural Heritage Network. State ranks are assigned by scientists in each state.

Global Heritage Status Rank Definitions

(Where no distinction is made, definition is identical for species and ecological communities).

- G1 Critically Imperiled – Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity or because of some factor of its biology making it especially vulnerable to extinction. Typically 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals (<1,000) or acres (<2,000) or stream miles (<10). [Critically endangered throughout its range.]
- G2 Imperiled - Imperiled globally because of rarity or because of other factors demonstrably making it very vulnerable to extinction or elimination throughout its range. Typically 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000) or acres (2,000 to 10,000) or stream miles (10 to 50). [Endangered throughout its range.]
- G3 Vulnerable – Vulnerable globally either because very rare and local throughout its range, found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations) or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extinction or elimination throughout its range. Typically of 21 to 100 occurrences or between 3,000 and 10,000 individuals. [Threatened throughout its range.]
- G4 Apparently Secure – Uncommon but not rare (although it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery), and usually widespread. Apparently not vulnerable in most of its range, but possibly cause for long-term concern. Typically more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- G5 Secure – Common, widespread, and abundant (although it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially on the periphery). Not vulnerable in most of its range. Typically with considerably more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- GX Presumed Extinct (species) - Believed to be extinct throughout its range, virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered.
- Eliminated (community) – Eliminated throughout its range, with no restoration potential due to extinction of dominant or characteristic species.
- GH Possibly Extinct (species) - Of historical occurrence throughout its range, i.e., formerly part of the established biota, with the expectation that it may be rediscovered (e.g. Ivory-billed woodpecker).
- Presumed Eliminated (Historical) (community elements) – Presumed eliminated throughout its range, with no or virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered, but with the potential for restoration.

Variant Global Rankings

- G#G#** Range Rank – A numeric range rank (e.g., G2G3) is used to indicate uncertainty about the exact status of a taxon. Ranges cannot skip more than one rank (e.g., GU should be used rather than G1G4).
- GU** Unrankable – Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.
- G?** Unranked – Global rank not yet assessed.
- HYB** Hybrid – Element not ranked because it represents an interspecific hybrid and not a species.
- ?** Inexact Numeric Rank – Denotes inexact numeric rank.
- Q** Questionable Taxonomy – Taxonomic status is questionable; numeric rank may change with taxonomy.
- T_** Intraspecific Taxon (trinomial) – The status of infraspecific taxa (subspecies or varieties) are indicated by a “T-rank” following the species’ basic global rank. A T subrank cannot imply the subspecies or variety is more abundant than the species’ basic global rank (i.e., a G1T2 subrank should not occur).

Natural Heritage State Ranks

- S1** Critically Imperiled – Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity or because of some factor of its biology making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals (<1,000). [Critically endangered in state.]
- S2** Imperiled – Imperiled in the state because of rarity or because of other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000). [Endangered in the state.]
- S3** Vulnerable – Vulnerable in the state either because rare and uncommon, or found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations), or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation. Typically 21 to 100 occurrences or between 3,000 to 10,000 individuals. [Threatened in the state.]
- S4** Apparently Secure – Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the state. Possible cause of long-term concern. Usually more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals

- S5 Secure – Common, widespread, and abundant in the state. Essentially ineradicable under present conditions. Typically with considerably more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- SX Presumed Extirpated – Element is believed to be extirpated from the state. Virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered.
- SH Possibly Extirpated (Historical) – Elements occurred historically in the state, and there is some expectation that it may be rediscovered. Its presence may not have been verified in the past 20 years.

Variant State Rankings

- S? Unranked – State rank not yet assessed.
- SU Unrankable – Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.
- SR Reported – Element reported in the state but without a basis for either accepting or rejecting the report, or the report not yet reviewed. Some of these are very recent discoveries for which the program hasn't yet received first-hand information; others are old, obscure reports.
- S#S# Range Rank – A numeric range rank (e.g., S2S3) is used to indicate the range of uncertainty about the exact status of the element. Ranges cannot skip more than one rank (e.g., SU should be used rather than S1S4).
- HYB Hybrid – Element not ranked because it represents an interspecific hybrid and not a species.
- ? Inexact Numeric Rank – Denotes inexact numeric rank.